

building blocks



May 2007

The online newsletter of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority
Vol. 3, Issue 2

Ninth Annual Michigan Conference on Affordable Housing was the Best to Date

The 2007 Michigan Conference on Affordable Housing took place this year from April 30 through May 2. As the largest conference of its kind in the nation, it is regarded as the premier place to network and brainstorm on affordable housing in the country.

The goal of the conference is to bring together people involved in various aspects of affordable housing to communicate with, inspire and inform each other on pressing issues in order to comprehensively solve them.

Conference chair Jess Sobel said, "The ninth annual Michigan Conference was a rousing success with 1,700 participants representing non-profit and for-profit housing developers, organizations engaged in ending homelessness, local and state government officials and other partners."

The conference kicked-off on Monday, April 30. Attendees traveled through various educational tracks, while given the opportunity to network with other industry advocates.

During lunch, Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) Executive Director Michael DeVos and Lansing Mayor Virgil Bernero spoke, setting the stage for

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A few pictures from the 2007 Michigan Conference on Affordable Housing

Industry Partners Work Together to Create Impressive Event at State Capitol

On May 2, affordable housing, community development and homelessness industry representatives saw firsthand how powerful they can be when they come together to speak with one voice. On the last day of Michigan's Conference on Affordable Housing, lunch was served on the Capitol lawn at what was called "Advocacy Day: Lunch on the Lawn."

It was estimated that more than 1,500 people attended this well-coordinated event and had an opportunity to speak to their legislators over lunch. The event culminated with a set of stirring speeches from our industry legislative champions Senator Mark Jansen and House Majority Leader Representative Steve Tobocman.

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From the Director's Desk

Change is a Good Thing for MSHDA and Michigan

Arnold Bennett, an early twentieth century English novelist, playwright, essayist, critic and journalist, once said “Any change, even a change for the better, is always accompanied by drawbacks and discomforts.”

That saying could certainly apply to MSHDA during the past two years and, although a certain amount of apprehension is inevitable, the rewards for enduring the growing pains can far outweigh the drawbacks.

We all know that Michigan's economy hasn't bounced back like that of other states, leaving us languishing in the number 48 spot out of 50 for our investment in housing. In order to actively do something about this less-than-desirable situation, we have had to change our thinking somewhat drastically to encompass **more than just affordable housing and homeless issues for underserved populations**. We are looking instead at investing in all of the people of Michigan – so they can live, work, play, raise families AND prosper in a state that provides thriving cities, towns and villages. In other words, **the goal is to create a healthy environment where Michigan residents can make all their dreams come true**.

Why do we need to change our perspective? One answer is because the households of the 21st century are different than those in the past.

Less than 25 percent of all households are married couples with children. Traditional one-worker families make up less than 15 percent of households.

According to responsible demographic studies, our country is dominated by the two largest generations in American history – the **Baby Boomers**, totaling 82 million people born between 1946 and 1964, and 78 million **Millennials** born between 1977 and 1996.



Millennials are mostly single, highly social, and often have early, unsettled careers. Our job is to attract these young, college-educated workers to our cities, but we can't do that unless we invest in those cities and also the surrounding smaller towns and villages, **making them vibrant and strong culturally and economically**.

MSHDA, under the direction of the current administration, is taking a leadership role in a number of initiatives designed to do just that. In the past, we may have been known as the affordable housing people with programs to assist the homeless and those that need supportive housing, but to transform Michigan's economy we must be more than that.

That is why ...

- we brought on the **Community Assistance Team (CATEam)** with programs aimed at community investment like Cool Cities, Michigan Main Street and Downtown Blueprints.

- our **Community Development** team is focusing on comprehensive strategies to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods throughout Michigan.

- initiatives have been developed and a new **Urban Revitalization division** was created at MSHDA.

- we have created **Michigan's Campaign to End Homelessness** – which focuses on ending homelessness on a statewide level within 10 years – along with the resources and people-power necessary to make it work. In fact, Michigan garnered two national awards recognizing the Campaign as the best and most likely to succeed in the nation.

We are pushing programs and initiatives that may seem unconventional on the surface, but in actuality, they reflect the need to build strong communities that will, in turn, **provide future economic opportunities in the state**.

When you really think about it, the changes aren't that drastic at all. We are still serving the populations we have committed to by providing them with healthy, vibrant cities, towns and villages along with an improved quality of life. At the same time, we are **helping transform Michigan's economy by investing in Michigan people**.

And before we're through, Michigan will be known for its booming economy and trendy cultural atmosphere, becoming THE place to live, work and play.

HomeAid Launches Statewide Chapter to Build Housing

HomeAid Michigan is a joint project of the Michigan Association of Home Builders, Corporation for Supportive Housing and partners MSHDA and Masco Corporation Foundation.

Inspired by a recent report on the growing population of homeless families and individuals in Michigan, HomeAid Michigan is the 21st chapter in the country to dedicate money, time and talent to creating housing solutions that harnesses the generosity of the building and trades partners to leverage cash investments by two-to-three times.

Coordinated by the Michigan Association of Home Builders, HomeAid Michigan will be using a three-year, \$250,000 grant from Masco Corporation and a potential grant from MSHDA to coordinate the first builds in the Detroit area. The Corporation for Supportive Housing will provide a community-based planning process for the HomeAid projects. "We are proud to be part of the HomeAid family because it brings out the very best in our membership by enabling them to do what they do best; build housing and give back to our community," said Bob Filka of the **Michigan Association of Home Builders**.

HomeAid was established in 1989 by California builders and later adopted by the National Association of Home Builders. "HomeAid is another example of an important private sector partnership to help us accomplish our goal of ending homelessness in Michigan," said MSHDA Executive Director Michael DeVos.

"We are proud to be part of the HomeAid family."

**-Bob Filka
Michigan Association
of Home Builders**

Creation of Urban Revitalization Division and Chief of Staff Appointment Boosts Authority's Effectiveness for Work Ahead



James Butler III, Director of Urban Revitalization



Margaret Garry, Chief of Staff

MSHDA Executive Director Michael R. DeVos recently announced the creation of the **Urban Revitalization** division at MSDHA, along with the appointment of Margaret Garry as new Chief of Staff.

To assure the ability to provide sufficient support to two of Governor Granholm's priority initiatives, **Cool Cities** and **Cities of Promise**, the Urban Revitalization division has been created to address the issues central to the transformation of Michigan's economy. James Butler III has been named as director and his leadership experience is expected to be a great asset to the Authority.

"James comes to MSHDA with deep management experience and a long history of community service," DeVos said. "James has truly outstanding skills in customer service and relationship management, which will be critical as we build our relationships with Cool Cities and Cities of Promise," DeVos said.

Most recently, James was the Vice President of the Michigan Broadband Development Authority and was previously a business unit executive for IBM Global Government for Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky.

Julie Hales-Smith and Louis Vinson, both currently with the Cities of Promise Initiative at MSHDA, were the first employees of the division. They are joined by Karen Gagnon, the Cool Cities Coordinator, who transferred from the Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG) along with Elizabeth Armstrong, also from DLEG.

"This group of people provides an extraordinary core group of staff to this new division, which will be coordinating activities with several other state agencies for work to benefit cities, towns and villages across Michigan," said DeVos.

The creation of this new division will provide permanent infrastructure

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Tools for Building Successful Families

MSHDA has a partner that is pointing low-income families to tools that will help them become economically self-sufficient and reach their goals: the **Michigan Individual Development Account Partnership (MIDAP)**. MIDAP is an organization that provides training, technical assistance and administrative oversight for all of the individual development account (IDA) programs across the state. Selected individuals make a commitment to an IDA to save up to

\$1,000 over a three-year period, complete a financial education program and receive a matching grant of \$3,000 in their IDA. Their IDA is earmarked and used to buy a home, invest in a business or gain a post-secondary education.

The payoff for families who

complete IDAs goes far beyond the \$4,000 that they receive. "Over and over, we hear that this is the thing that breaks the cycle of poverty for them. No one ever spent their way out of poverty. IDAs show families how to make a commitment to a better future that pays off for a lifetime," says Mary Townley, Director of the Division of

"IDAs show families how to make a future that pays off for a lifetime"

*-Mary Townley
Homeownership Division*

Homeownership at MSHDA. "You cannot just hand someone money and ask them to change. This is about changing patterns of thinking and patterns in behavior for increased self esteem and new skills in managing limited resources. These participants actually change the way that they view themselves."

Judy Gardi is the Community Reinvestment Initiative coordinator for the Michigan Credit Union League, which is a supporter of MIDAP. Judy

sees MSHDA as the facilitator that pushes to keep this program going and to be the best it can be. "It's a valuable role since housing is such a critical need. They bend over backward to provide what they can to make a project work."



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MSHDA has helped by pledging funds for the matching portion of the IDA. "Through February 28, 2007, 971 IDA Participants have made an asset investment (667 homes purchased, 184 education accounts uses and 120 business accounts uses). The mortgages leveraged to date exceed \$59 million," says Mary. "It's a program that has a low drop-out rate, and high satisfaction levels for its participants. We are pleased to be a partner in this successful program."

PIP Income Limits Get a Lift

Good news for Michigan home and rental property owners! MSHDA has raised the income limits to qualify for its **Property Improvement Program (PIP)** effective April 15, 2007.

With PIP, qualifying Michigan property owners may borrow funds at a low-interest rate to make repairs and improvements to existing housing. Interested individuals may apply at any participating lender or nonprofit organization.

The PIP loan was designed to give participants the flexibility of either contracting out the entire job or doing the work themselves (depending on local building codes) while financing only the materials.

The types of property improvements that owners may make with a loan from the MSHDA Property Improvement Program include: painting, siding, roofing, window replacement, kitchen and bathroom remodeling, wiring upgrades and additions.

Here is a comparison between the old and new PIP income limits, based on Gross Annual Household Income:

The PIP interest rate for non-owner occupied properties remains at 8% unless the property is located in a MSHDA-approved target area and the loan-to-value (LTV) is less than 80%. In this case, the PIP interest rate is 6%.

For more information on the MSHDA Property Improvement Program, interested parties can contact

Old Income Levels and Interest Rates

Less than \$16,999 – 4%
\$17,000 - \$29,000 – 6%
\$30,000 - \$72,250 – 8%
(6% if loan-to-value (LTV) is less than 80%)

New Income Levels and Interest Rates

Less than \$19,999 – 4%
\$20,000 - \$39,999 – 6%
\$40,000 - \$72,250 – 8%
(6% if LTV 80% or if in MSHDA approved area)

Bill Parker, Property Improvement Program Coordinator, at 517-373-1462. Information about PIP can also be found online at www.michigan.gov/mshda.

What's New With Cities of Promise

Cities of Promise Blight Elimination Program

The **Cities of Promise** program was started by Governor Granholm as an interagency initiative to redevelop communities and reduce poverty. The cities are those that are experiencing sometimes devastating conditions because of declining population, extreme poverty, loss of industry and jobs, crumbling infrastructure and blighted neighborhoods. The cities identified for this initiative are Benton Harbor, Detroit, Flint, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Muskegon Heights, Pontiac and Saginaw.

The Blight Elimination Program is the critical first step in revitalization planning/implementation, safety and security campaigns, redevelopment planning and quality-of-life programming. Estimates suggest that there are more than 16,000 blighted residential properties in these eight cities. Approximately 6,700 of the properties are publicly owned. The



One of MSHDA's recent workshops aimed at Blight Elimination

magnitude of the problem makes total elimination impossible; however, with strategic placement of limited resources, very visible, positive impact can occur through the demolition of blighting and hazardous structures that cannot be cost-effectively rehabilitated.

The expectation is that this program will allow the Cities to leverage their current Community Development Block Grant demolition funding to expand their current demolition programs by number and type. The

first priority will be publicly owned residential properties, especially in this first year of the four-year program. Most importantly, the program will work in conjunction with existing local Partnership Team priorities to reduce unsafe conditions and make neighborhoods more attractive.

The Blight Elimination Program has several goals targeted at improving the Cities of Promise. These goals include eliminating unsafe structures, increasing blighted structure demolitions and incorporating a process to increase skills of homeless persons by building a strategic partnership with key community stakeholders who educate and provide employment services.

MSHDA recently hosted two workshops — one in Detroit and one in Lansing — aimed at the Blight Elimination Program within the Cities of Promise. The Detroit workshop hosted city leaders from Highland

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New Web Site Holds Promise

MSHDA just unveiled its new **Cities of Promise Web site**. The Cities of Promise, an initiative that is part of Governor Granholm's urban agenda, include: Highland Park, Flint, Saginaw, Benton Harbor, Pontiac, Muskegon Heights and Detroit. Final touches are still being made to the site, but soon web surfers will be able to visit all eight of Michigan's Cities of Promise and learn just about everything there is to know about each town.

The Cities of Promise Web site will continue to develop in several phases. The first phase, currently online, features the cities of Highland Park, Flint and Benton Harbor with the other five to follow soon after.

When you visit **www.citiesofpromise.org**, you'll be greeted by a

message from Governor Jennifer M. Granholm. From there, you'll be able to explore each city. When you click on **City Histories** you'll learn how it all began through how things got to where they are today. Clicking on **Photo Essays** might take you to a farmer's market or give you a tour of a historic part of town. In the **Media Room**, you'll find upcoming events and the latest news on each city's revitalization efforts. When you visit the Cities of Promise **Resources** page, you might find a job, a support program or other helpful information. **Quick Facts** will show you demographics, unique features, top employers and more. You'll also find links to many other useful Web sites.

MSHDA's Cities of Promise Web site is a work in progress and always will



The Cities of Promise home page

be — because that's exactly what the Cities of Promise are ... works in progress. We hope you visit our little corner of the world often ... and experience the rise, fall and revitalization of Highland Park, Flint, Saginaw, Benton Harbor, Pontiac, Muskegon Heights, Hamtramck and Detroit — eight of the most "promising" cities in Michigan — at **www.citiesofpromise.org**.

G.P.A. Program Helps Grads Stay in Michigan

MSHDA Strengthens Ties with Michigan's Graduates, Universities Through GPA

For the better part of a century, Michigan's economy has relied largely on the automotive industry. It is no secret that globalization has left this narrowly focused, manufacture-based economy in need of repair. The defective financial situation has generated an attitude of change in Michigan and has proven the need to diversify the economic focus onto technology and service-based industries.

But after decades of holding factory jobs, many of Michigan's citizens were less than prepared to enter these new and upcoming fields. For a time it seemed that this economic transition would be nearly impossible. It was then that Michigan's largest untapped resource was realized: its colleges and universities.

College students have already made a commitment to Michigan by traveling to or remaining in the state to earn a degree. Michigan schools produce some of the best and brightest graduates in the country. These students already

have the skills to change Michigan's economy, but they need to be shown that there is value in staying.

The **Graduate Purchase Assistance Program (GPA)** hopes to do just that. An extension

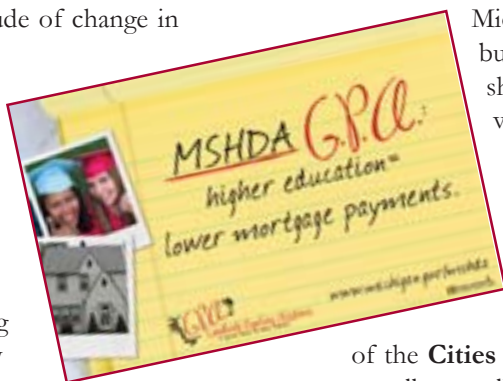
of the **Cities of Promise**, this program allows college graduates to purchase a home in one of Michigan's Cities of Promise at below-market mortgage interest rates. Students must apply within three years of earning an associate's, bachelor's, master's or doctorate degree.

This month, MSHDA is starting its

push to keep Michigan's graduates in our state by unfolding an outreach plan to alumni associations and college presidents. This partnership will allow information about the GPA program to reach thousands of dedicated alumni through the communications tools they already receive on a regular basis. Many of these graduates want to stay in the state after graduation but might not think doing so is affordable. MSHDA's communication efforts will give them insight on making their homeownership dreams come true.

By appealing to colleges and universities, MSHDA is able to educate the alumni associations on why keeping alumni local is such a positive thing and how MSHDA can help them keep their most dedicated supporters in the area. This joint effort gives MSHDA yet another partner in affordable housing.

For questions regarding the program, contact Mary Townley at townleym1@michigan.gov or (517) 373-6864.



MSHDA Helps Make Homeownership a Reality for Michigan-Bound Grad

For most recent college grads, homeownership is an illusion, not a reality. Tuition hikes, increases in loan interest rates and rising living expenses make large investments extremely difficult for this demographic. Although homeownership seems unattainable, twenty-something's are becoming extremely attracted to the idea of owning rather than renting.

According to Samantha Anger, a 22-year-old 2005 Saginaw Valley State University alum, homeownership doesn't come easy. "I was very lucky, as I received several scholarships to attend college and had saved for

school for a long time," she said. "Some recent graduates want to buy to build equity but don't think it is an option for them because of student loan debt. They are really concerned that the funds will not be there."

MSHDA is doing its part to help graduates realize the dream of homeownership. In October of 2006, MSHDA, along with Gov. Granholm, announced the birth of the GPA program.

This new program offers a 30-year, fixed-rate conventional loan at a below-market interest rate to college graduates with an associate's, bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree. Individuals must



Anger and friend in her new home made possible by the GPA Program

have graduated from an accredited institution within three years prior to the loan application date and meet MSHDA's sale price and income limit eligibility guidelines.

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Upcoming Conferences in Michigan

Downtown revitalization, homeless issues and asset management are all topics that will be covered in 2007 by MSHDA and other industry leaders at upcoming conferences in Michigan.

- MSHDA's **Community Assistance Team (CATeam)** will be hosting the Downtown Revitalization Conference on **September 18, 19 and 20** at the Park Place Hotel and Traverse City Opera House in downtown Traverse City. The conference will bring together community leaders to discuss the creation of successful strategies and case studies for attracting new investment, jobs and young professionals to city centers. For more information, please visit the conference Web site at: www.michigandowntownconference.org or contact the CATeam at (517) 241-1737.

- The second annual **Summit on Ending Homelessness** will be held **October 15 and 16** at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing. The summit brings together hundreds of leaders in the industry to discuss homeless issues and work on the statewide 10-year plan to end homelessness, which was rolled out at the 2006 Michigan Homeless Summit. For more information regarding the Summit please visit the MSHDA Web site at: www.michigan.gov/mshda or contact Juliann Kline at (517) 241-1440.

- The **Office of Asset Management** will be hosting the **Asset Management and Contract Administration Fall Conference** on **September 12** at the University Club in East Lansing with Housing and Urban Development, Michigan Multifamily Asset Manager and Extension of Professional Service

Asset Management and Contract Administration Conference

September 12th

University Club
East Lansing

Downtown Revitalization Conference

September 18th - 19th

Park Place Hotel and
Traverse City Opera House
Traverse City

Summit on Ending Homelessness

October 15th - 16th

Kellogg Center
East Lansing

Contract. The conference hosts property managers from around the state. For more information please visit the MSHDA Web site at: www.michigan.gov/mshda or contact Susan Hengesbach at (517) 335-2713.

MSHDA Helps Make Homeownership a Reality

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Anger is the first graduate to purchase a home with the assistance of the GPA program. "When I first thought of buying a home, I shopped around for the best loan for me," she said. "But interest rates just seemed so high. That's when a loan officer suggested the MSHDA loan program."

The eligible college grad's home purchase must be located within the city limits of one of the Cities of Promise which are Benton Harbor, Detroit, Flint, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Muskegon Heights, Pontiac and Saginaw. The economies of these cities, once industry based, are turning their focus to service and technology industries. New graduates, bringing fresh ideas and the latest knowledge, are ideal citizens for these promising cities.

Anger found infinite professional possibilities in Saginaw. "I grew up in a small town, but there are no jobs to be had out there," she said. "By staying in Saginaw, I was able to stay close to my family and friends and still have a career."

Governor Granholm believes that the GPA program is the most promising way to keep Michigan's graduates in the state, and she hopes the low interest rates will make doing so more feasible for the college graduates.

This was certainly the case for Anger. "I would definitely recommend this program to other graduates," she said. "I have friends graduating in May that are really considering a MSHDA loan, because they see that it has helped me out tremendously."

Industry Partners Work Together

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They were joined by Senator Buzz Thomas and Representative Bill Huizenga. The Coalition for Michigan's Housing and Community Development Fund chairperson, Ken Bensen closed the event.

"Living In Michigan Means Investing In Michigan" was one of the key messages sent to legislators with the hopes that they would prioritize funding for Michigan's Housing and Community Development Fund within the 2008 budget. Grassroots efforts to advocate for the Fund continue.

Sign up to receive
Building Blocks via e-mail!
For more information, visit
www.housingconference.org

MSHDA's "Living in the D" Campaign Recognized for Excellence

MSHDA's "Living in the D" campaign, crafted by marketing and public relations firm Donovan & Smith Marketing and Media, Inc., has been recognized with a PACE Award of Excellence in the Campaign category. The PACE Awards are the industry awards for public relations professionals, and this award comes from the Central Michigan Public Relations Society of America.

The multi-faceted campaign engaged several media outlets in the Detroit area in a long-term public service, promotional, editorial and paid-media strategy to create a positive alternative narrative for living in Detroit. The campaign included an ad campaign in Crain's Detroit for developers (for-profit and nonprofit), stakeholders and community development corporations. The ads were placed immediately adjacent to

a regular monthly feature called "Why I Live in Detroit," created specifically for the campaign. The campaign also included a huge House Party promotion, a special edition magazine and web presence from Crain's – as well as promotions, public service announcements, stakeholder meetings for newsmakers and paid commercials on CBS Radio's WWJ-AM and WVMV-FM.

An original jingle was also written and produced by Donovan & Smith to support the campaign. All messages also directed the listeners and readers to the popular weekly e-magazine www.ModelDMedia.com, a site sponsored in part by MSHDA, to showcase good news about Detroit and Detroit neighborhoods.

"As former owners and managers of media outlets, we had the competitive edge to know what to ask for and how to ask our media partners for this kind of support," said Katie



The PACE Award presented to Donovan & Smith Marketing and Media, Inc.

Donovan, President of Donovan & Smith Marketing and Media, Inc. "This recognition is an honor for not only MSHDA but also the media partners that really delivered for Detroit."

Conference on Affordable Housing

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this year's keynote speaker, Jeanette Walls. Walls, a journalist for MSNBC and the author of the critically acclaimed book, "The Glass Castle," gave a moving account of growing up in an unstable home environment, which oftentimes left her and her family homeless. After her moving presentation, Walls held a book signing for all conference attendees.

Monday concluded with a reception, including entertainment by Men of Grace, Grace Centers of Hope's musical group comprised of men who have completed the Center's one-year rehabilitation program.

On Tuesday, May 1, the conference continued with more educational tracks, panelists and networking events. The Awards Luncheon took place Tuesday afternoon and

honored Michigan's deserving advocates who have displayed an extraordinary commitment to providing affordable housing opportunities and eliminating homelessness.

The premier award at the conference is the Terrence R. Duvernay Award and is given in honor of the former Executive Director of MSHDA. Duvernay's vision and leadership were responsible for the development of the most successful housing development programs in the nation.

This year's recipient was Mr. Ron Calery, Executive Director of the Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency. Calery was selected based on his efforts to provide affordable housing to those least fortunate; and his tireless, selfless dedication to aid those who most need it.

The conference concluded on Wednesday, May 2, with the addition of this year's Advocacy Day. State Representative Steve Tobocman, Senator Mark Jansen and Pat Harrington of Muchmore Harrington Smalley & Associates led the morning Plenary Session, after which, all attendees traveled to the Capitol Lawn to meet with legislators and rally for affordable housing, community development and homeless issues.

Sobel said, "We have a vision of communities of choice – diverse, healthy, vibrant communities where people choose to live, work and play." The conference's focus on action unified everyone present and will certainly help make the dream of ending homelessness in Michigan a reality.



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Web Site at:

www.citiesofpromise.org

MSHDA Supports Big Plan Big Anniversary for Lansing Realtors

The Greater Lansing Association of Realtors is celebrating its 100th anniversary, and to help celebrate MSHDA has joined with the Greater Lansing Housing Coalition to give away Curb Appeal Home Makeovers.

The makeovers are targeted for homeowners in the Greater Lansing area. The Greater Lansing Housing Coalition has established the

selection criteria and has assisted the Association of Realtors and community neighborhood groups in spreading the word about this opportunity.

Through a \$30,000 MSHDA grant, three homeowners were selected for the Curb Appeal Makeovers. Stay tuned for the exciting before and after photos.

Urban Revitalization

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and support to the Cool Cities and the Cities of Promise initiatives.

In addition to the creation of the new division, DeVos also announced the hiring of Margaret Garry as the new Chief of Staff for the Authority. Garry was formerly the Vice President of Mexicantown Community Development Corporation, a Community Development Corporation in Detroit. Garry spearheaded the effort to develop the Mexicantown International Welcome Center and Mercado, a retail and cultural center in the heart of Mexicantown in Detroit.

Prior to her community development work, Garry acted as a consultant, performing housing market analyses and economic impact analyses. Garry was honored as one of Detroit's Most Enterprising Women by the Detroit Historical Society as well as one of Detroit's "40 Under 40" by Crain's Detroit Business. The Community Economic Development Association of Michigan also selected her as Staff Person of the Year in 2002.

"Margaret will be coordinating functions in the executive division and will work closely with me and Deputy Director Burney Johnson, coordinating and leading efforts related to operations," said DeVos.

Cities of Promise Blight Elimination

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Park, Hamtramck, Pontiac and Detroit. The Lansing workshop hosted city leaders from Muskegon Heights, Benton Harbor, Saginaw and Flint. The workshops were targeted at bringing together the Community/Economic Development Directors from the eight cities as well as state agency staff to discuss the Blight Elimination Program.

Upcoming Events

Summit on Ending Homelessness

October 15th - 16th

Kellogg Center
East Lansing

Asset Management and Contract Administration Conference

September 12th

University Club
East Lansing

Downtown Revitalization Conference

September 18th - 19th

Park Place Hotel and
Traverse City Opera House
Traverse City